

EXAMPLES OF ANCIENT ART.—(SEE PAGE 25.)

Fig. 3.

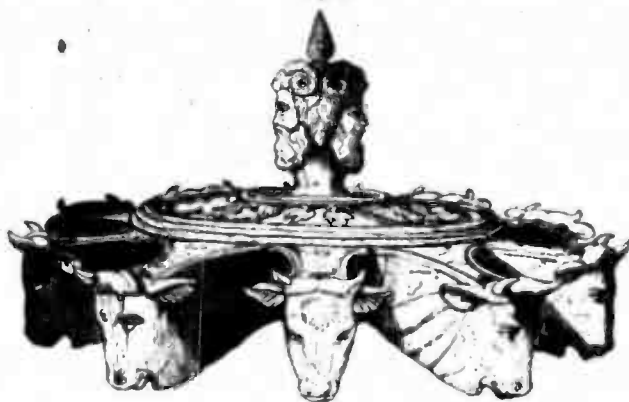


Fig. 4.

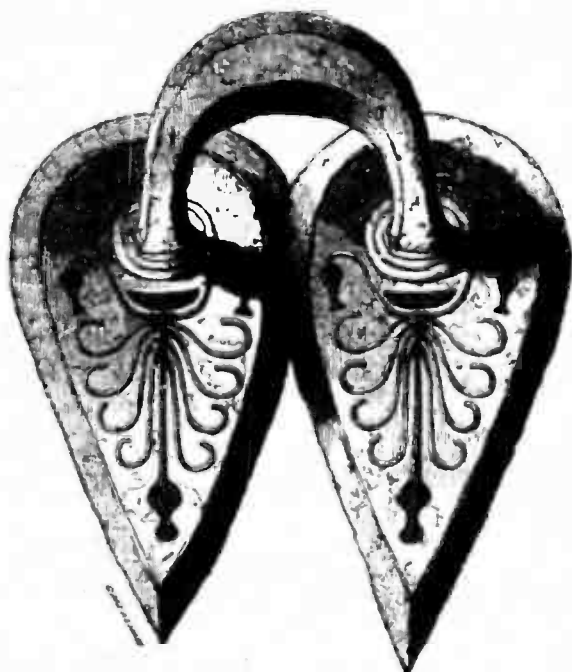


Fig. 1.

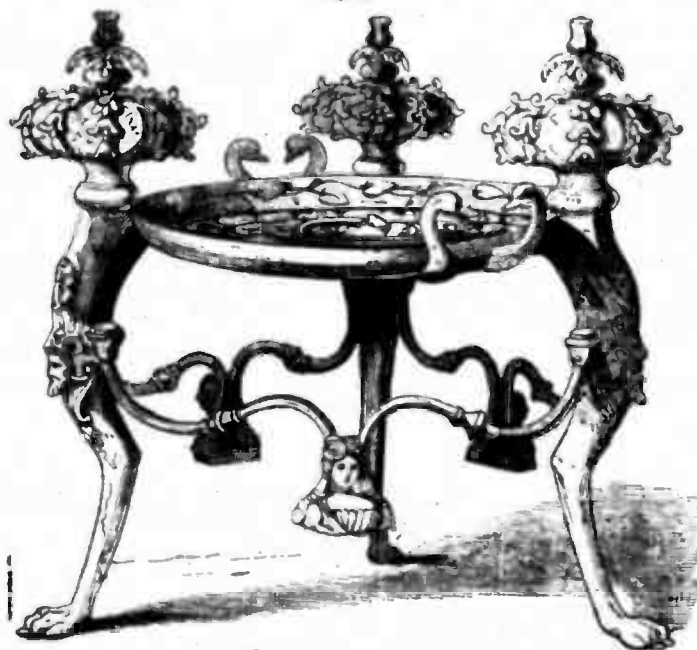
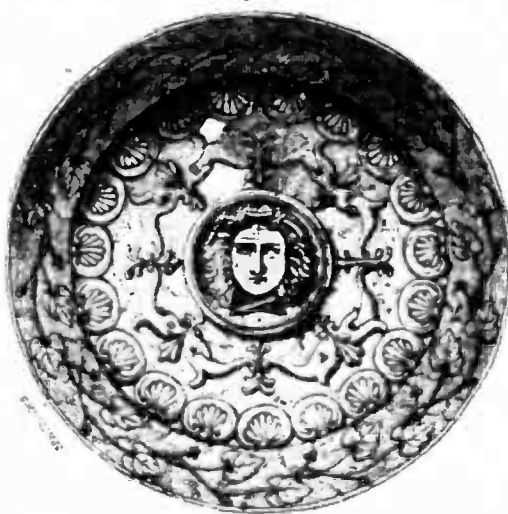


Fig. 2.



our subject will be to notice the present condition of buildings in the city of Caen, and one or two in this country, which are constructed, beyond doubt, with similar material. Without mentioning any particular building, I may state in general terms, and with little fear of contradiction, that all the richly decorated old churches and other highly ornamented edifices, of early date, in the city of Caen are, viewing them collectively, in a comparatively perfect state; the stonework being almost invariably in good condition, considering the great age of some of the structures. There is, or rather was, one building of celebrity in this country, to which I may allude, because the records of the time state particulars and cost of certain quantities of Caen stone used in its construction.* I mean the chapel of St. Stephen, at Westminster, very recently demolished, except the crypt or under chapel. Although this building could not have been less than 500 years old, yet the carved ornaments and mouldings were in a most excellent state of preservation. I will mention one more circumstance in favour of Caen stone. The cloisters of St. Stephen's Chapel and ornamental Gothic work over them, on the east side of Westminster Hall, are said to have been erected about the year 1530. The greater portion of the richly panelled tracery above these cloisters has just been taken down to make certain alterations, and the Caen stonework is considered by the architect, Mr. Barry, to be in a sufficiently perfect state to be reconstructed without fresh working.

If, in the same manner, we examine modern buildings, or such as have been constructed with Caen stone, either in France or England, within the last twenty or thirty years, we find much variety in the durability of different pieces: some appear effectually to resist the most trying atmospheric influences, and, to all appearance, will remain for many years without shewing the slightest symptom of decay, although wrought into the most delicate ornaments, and placed in very exposed situations; whereas other stones, immediately adjoining the perfect ones, begin to moulder and perish from the first day after they have been placed in the building. In some few instances of buildings of recent date, the entire surface of the masonry retains very nearly the same clean, cream-coloured appearance which it had immediately after completion. Beware of so flattering a prospect. In an atmosphere remote from the metropolis, or from a smoky manufacturing town, such circumstances may take place unattended by premature decay; and it is quite possible that an architect, in his de-

* Rolls of the time of Edward III., containing accounts of expenses relating to the erection of this chapel.—Smith's "Antiquities of Westminster,"—Brayley and Brinsford's "History of the Ancient Palace and Houses of Parliament at Westminster," 1836.